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THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

OF all the memorable events connected with the life of Jesus Christ hardly any is of greater importance than his resurrection. The Christian Church has always based its very right of existence upon the truth of the Easter-message. No less an authority than Saint Paul has written: "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching in vain, your faith also is vain,"¹ and: "If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable."² In view of such statements it cannot be denied that, the Easter-message once generally discredited, men will cease to recognise in Jesus of Nazareth their Messiah. But, on the other hand, it is very clear that the traditional representation of the Easter-event arouses more outspoken doubt and contradiction than anything else in the teachings of the Christian Church.

Such a condition of affairs is apt to compel Christians to investigate the true causes of the hostility encountered by the Easter-message. Theoretically speaking, there are three possible explanations. Man may be induced by his natural perversity to reject and scorn what is true and wholesome for no other reason than because it is true and wholesome. Or, the Easter-message may be utterly incredible and false. Or, finally, the Easter-truth may be presented in such a wrong way that the average hearer is repelled, instead of attracted, by it. In order to ascertain the true cause, it will be necessary to define clearly and distinctly the original and therefore

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 14.

² 1 Cor. xv. 17-19.

unquestionably orthodox meaning of the Easter-message. Having done that, we may proceed and determine with comparative ease whether we share that belief, and what modifications, if any, we have to make concerning it.

The original apostles defined their mission as that of witnesses to the resurrection of Christ.¹ Both Saint Peter and Saint Paul are seen to lay the greatest stress upon the fact that Jesus Christ, after his death on the cross, rose on the third day from the dead.² The question, however, is what idea they desired to impart to the mind of their audiences when they stated: "The Lord is risen!" Friedrich Schleiermacher, "a prince among theologians,"³ supplies the following answer: "There are two contradictory indications in the narratives. First, the indication that we have to think of his condition as the restoration of his life in his former state; second, other indications which prompt the supposition that a continuity of the existence of Christ is not to be believed, but that the whole rather appears to be a phantom. Among those of the first class I reckon first of all that Christ was seen in his former shape and figure. Otherwise, Mary would not immediately have recognised him. How could he have referred his disciples to his wounds? He even expressly denies representing a being exempt from the ordinary course of nature, that is to say, he exercises all human functions, eating and drinking not excepted. That is the one image offered of the risen Christ. But there are indeed other traits, namely, that he disappeared, that he entered a room while the doors were locked, and especially the quite sporadic character of his appearances, without any notice concerning his place of abode in the meantime. These latter features obliterate the image. But I presume it to be evident that we have to ascribe the greatest importance to the utterance of Christ, that intentional utterance, by which he desired to convince his disciples of being absolutely the same as before."⁴ This explanation of Christ's resurrection is

¹ Acts i. 22.

² Acts ii. 22-33, iii. 15, iv. 10, x. 40, xiii. 30, xvii. 31, xxvi. 23.

³ Comp. G. P. Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 1899, p. 502.

⁴ Schleiermacher, *Das Leben Jesu*, Berlin, 1864, p. 473. (The German text

also advocated by the church-historian Karl Hase¹ and the Chevalier Bunsen,² not to speak of their less renowned predecessors. They held that Jesus's death on the cross was not real death, but a deep, death-like trance. After the supposed corpse had been deposited in the cool chamber of the tomb, Jesus awoke, and, having quickly closed up his wounds and regained strength by means of his wonderful art and power of healing, he went forth to look for his faithful adherents.

This conception of Christ's resurrection appears very plausible at first sight. It surely avoids certain very serious objections which have been raised against the traditional view. But the first argument with which Schleiermacher attempts to support it,—the striking resemblance between the risen and the crucified Christ, the scars, or marks of his wounds,—does not seem to be very firmly established. The likeness cannot in two cases at least have been very marked. For, according to John,³ Mary did not instantaneously recognise the risen Lord, but mistook him for the gardener; and, according to Luke,⁴ the two Emmaus-disciples did not know Jesus, although he had walked and talked with them for quite a while. Their eyes were not opened, until at supper "he took the bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them," or, in other words, performed the characteristic rite of the Lord's Supper.

The two principal passages on which Schleiermacher's hypothesis might be based are found in Luke xxiv. 36–43 and John xx. 26–29.⁵ According to them Jesus invited his disciples to touch him in order to convince them that he was not a spirit, but a living being of flesh and bones. He even ate a piece of broiled fish in their presence and thus demonstrated in an unquestionable manner his real corporeality. But while it cannot be doubted that, according to

is rather unpolished, because the book was not published by the author, but embodies only notes taken at his recitations.)

¹ *Geschichte Jesu*, 1876, p. 602 f.

² *Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde*, Vol. IX., p. 470.

³ John xx. 14 ff.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 16 ff.

⁵ Comp. Matth. xxviii. 9 and Acts x. 41.

those passages, the risen Lord had a palpable body, it is by no means certain that he merely possessed an ordinary human body. For in Luke the question is not: What kind of body did the risen Christ have? but rather: Had he a body, or was he an incorporeal being? The Greek word for spirit we encounter there may indeed be translated: phantom, or ghost, that is, the spirit of a dead person which haunts the dwelling-places of the living and becomes visible to them.

A short investigation and review of the Jewish notions as to life after death and the nature of heavenly beings which prevailed in the New Testament age will establish that fact beyond a reasonable doubt. In Hauck's *Realencyclopädie für protestantische Theologie*, 1896, for instance, we read: "The Israelitic conception of Sheol is based on the conviction that decomposition of the corpse by which dust returns to dust (Gen. ii. 14, Ps. cxlvi. 9, Eccl. xii. 7) does not signify entire annihilation of human existence, but that in death an incorporeal image of the living man is separated from the body, the habitation of which is Sheol. With regard to this shade, they did not originally think of "the soul" (נֶפֶשׁ) or "spirit" (רוּחַ) of man. Not "souls" or "spirits" dwell in Sheol, but רִשְׁמוֹת "the shades,"¹ or "the flaccid, weak"² (Is. xiv. 9, xxvi. 14, 19, Ps. lxxxviii. 11, Prov. ii. 18, ix. 18, xxi. 16, Job xxvi. 5) in which all the characteristics of the individual are retained, but in a mode of existence void of all the impulses which are given with the ability of eating, feeling, choosing, and acting, and, consequently, in accordance with the Hebrew way of thinking, of everything that can be called *life*."³

R. H. Charles has treated this subject more comprehensively.⁴ He says of the dwelling-place of the dead in the Old Testament: "Sheol was in all probability originally conceived as a combination of the graves of the clan or nation, and as thus its final abode. In

¹ Revised Version.

² *Encyclopædia Biblica* of Cheyne.

³ See article "Hades."

⁴ R. H. Charles, *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel*, etc., London, 1899.

due course this conception was naturally extended till it embraced the departed of all nations, and thus became the final abode of all mankind, good and bad alike. It has nearly reached this stage in Ezek. xxxii.; Is. xiv.; Job xxx. 23 ('the house appointed for all living'); Eccl. xii. 5 ('his eternal house')."¹ "Sheol is said to have different divisions or chambers, *חֲבֵצֵי שְׁאוֹל* (Prov. vii. 27). It is provided with gates (Ps. ix. 14, cvii. 18; Job xxxviii. 17; Is. xxxviii. 10). These are secured with bars (Job xvii. 16). It is the land of disorder (Job x. 22), and of dust (Dan. xii. 2; Job vii. 21, xvii. 16). As regards its position, Sheol was supposed to be situated in the lowest parts of the earth (Ps. lxxiii. 9, lxxxvi. 13; Ezek. xxvi. 20, xxxi. 14, xxxii. 18, 24), below the sea (Job xxvi. 5), yet above the subterranean waters (Ps. lxxi. 20). It is likewise known as the 'pit,' *בּוֹר* (Ezek. xxvi. 20, xxxi. 14, 16, xxxii. 18, 24, 25, 29, 30; Lam. iii. 53, 55; Is. xiv. 15, 19; Prov. i. 12, xxviii. 17; Ps. xxviii. 1, xxx. 3, lxxxviii. 4, cxliii. 7), or *שְׁמַיִם* (Is. xxxviii. 17, li. 14; Ezek. xxviii. 8; Job xvii. 14, xxxiii. 18, 22, 24, 28, 30). So situated, Sheol is naturally without light. It is 'the land of darkness,' of thick darkness as darkness itself, 'where light is as darkness' (Job x. 21, 22)."²

The condition of the dead, or the inhabitants of Sheol, is described, as follows: "Death, according to the Old Testament, means an end of the earthly life, but not the cessation of all existence. After death the person still subsists,"³ namely in Sheol. "The departed were conceived as possessing a soul and a shadowy body. In the older days they were called shades (*rephaim*), or, when addressed, *elohim*. During the later times when such a doctrine of man's being became current as that in Gen. ii., iii. the departed were called "dead ones," or "shades," as in the older days."⁴

Charles does not discuss the nature of the body of the departed, beyond stating that it is "shadowy." He speaks, however, of "the metaphysical inability of early Israel to conceive the body without psychical functions, or the soul without a certain corporeity."⁵ That implies, as a matter of course, that the soul in Sheol resem-

¹ See p. 33.² See p. 35.³ See p. 36.⁴ P. 48 f.⁵ P. 48. f.

bled its former possessor in life. This conclusion is supported by the story of the witch of Endor.¹ She conjured up the soul of Samuel for Saul and described its appearance as that of an old man, covered with a robe.² This robe (רֹמֶה) is also mentioned in 1 Sam. xv. 27, and was a kind of gown, serving as the official robe of the prophet.³ The appearance of the ghost of Samuel as well as the frequent reference to necromancers in the Old Testament⁴ show at the same time that the Jews believed the souls of the departed to be enabled under certain conditions to return to the upper world and reveal themselves by their form and voice to living men, notwithstanding the fact that they deemed it a very grave sin to practise the black art of necromancy.

These ideas are essentially identical with those cherished by the ancient Greeks and Romans, as they are presented to us by Homer and Vergil. They likewise believed that after death the souls of men were gathered together in subterraneous regions, called in Homer Ἀΐδαιο δόμοι ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίης (dwellings of Hades in the depths of the earth beneath).⁵ The inhabitants of that lower world are ψυχαί, εἰδῶλα καμόντων (souls, phantoms of the weary),⁶ and νεκύων ἀμενῆνὰ κάρηνα (the unsubstantial heads of the manes).⁷ They are not endowed with a material body. When Achilles attempted to embrace the soul of his friend Patroclus, οὐδ' ἔλαβε (he did not take hold of him), but ψυχὴ κατὰ χθονὸς ἥντε καπνὸς ὤχετο τετριγυῖα (the soul went squeaking down into the earth like smoke.)⁸ That is more fully explained, Od. xi. 204 ff, in the course of Odysseus's account of his visit to Hades's domains. He thrice made ineffectual efforts to embrace the soul of his mother; and when he complained of her fleeing away from him, she replied :

ἀλλ' αὐτὴ δίκη ἐστὶ βροτῶν, ὅτε κέν τε θάνωσιν·
οὐ γὰρ ἐτι σάρκας τε καὶ ὀστέα ἴνες ἔχουσιν,

¹ 1 Sam. xxviii.

² 1 Sam. xxviii. 14.

³ Comp. Gesenius, *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch*.

⁴ See: Deut. xviii. 11, 2 Kings xxi. 6, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6, Lev. xix. 31, xx. 6, 1 Sam. xxviii. 3, 9, Is. viii. 19, xix. 3, xxix. 4, Deut. xviii. 11.

⁵ Il. xxii. 482, Od. xxiv. 204.

⁶ Od. xxiv. 14.

⁷ Od. xi. 29, 49.

⁸ Il. xxiii. 100 f.

ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν τε πυρὸς κρατερὸν μένος αἰθομένοιο
 δαμνᾷ, ἐπεὶ κε πρῶτα λίπη λείκ' ὅστέα θυμός,
 ψυχὴ δ' ἥντ' ὄνειρος ἀποπταμένη πεπότηται.

This is the lot of mortals after they have died. For the nerves no longer have flesh and bones. But the mighty force of the blazing fire consumes them, as soon as the spirit has forsaken the white bones. The soul, however, escapes, flying away like a dream.¹

Yet these unsubstantial souls closely resembled in outward appearance those persons to whom they had belonged during their lifetime. Of the soul of Patroclus, for instance, we read :

ἦλθε ἐπὶ ψυχῇ Πατροκλῆος δειλοῖο,
 πάντ' αὐτῷ, μέγεθός τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ', εἰκνῖα,
 καὶ φωνήν, καὶ τοῖα περὶ χροὶ εἴματα ἔστο.

The soul of poor Patroclus came on, being like him in every respect, in stature and beautiful eyes and voice, and had put on his body just such garments."²

When Odysseus descended into the nether world where he was to seek the advice of Tiresias, he encountered and recognised his companion Elpenor, his mother Anticlea, and many other souls.³ In like manner, the soul of Agamemnon knew immediately the soul of Amphimedon, his guest-friend of Ithaca, which together with the souls of the other suitors of Penelope was conducted to the "asphodel meadow."⁴

The Roman poet Vergil hands down to us a very similar picture of the place of abode and nature of the souls. He describes, in imitation of Homer, Æneas's descent into the lower world.⁵ The souls he meets there are just as incorporeal as those of Homer. For instance, the Trojan hero comes at length to his father and :

"Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum,
 Ter frustra comprehensa manus effugit imago,
 Par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno."

There thrice he attempted to put his arms around his neck ; thrice the shade, seized in vain, escaped his hands like light breezes and very similar to a winged dream.⁶

¹ Od. XI. 218.

² Il. XXIII. 65-67, comp. v. 107.

³ Od. XI. 51 ff., 84 ff.

⁴ Od. XXIV. 102 ff.

⁵ Æneid VI. 268-896.

⁶ Æneid VI. 700-702.

Compare :

ἐγὼ γ' ἐθέλον φρεσὶ μερμηρίζας
μητρὸς ἐμῆς ψυχὴν ἐλέειν κατατεθνηύτης.
τρὶς μὲν ἐφωρμήθην, ἐλέειν τέ με θυμὸς ἀνώγει,
τρὶς δέ μοι ἐκ χειρῶν σκιῇ εἵκελον ἦ καὶ ὄνειρ
ἔπτατο.

I, after having reflected in my mind, desired to grasp the soul of my dead mother. Thrice I started eagerly, and my spirit impelled me, but three times it flew away from my hands like a shadow or also like a dream.¹

Also the inhabitants of the vestibule of Hades, the Centaurs, the Scyllas, the Hydra, Chimæra, etc., are said to be: "tenuēs sine corpore vitas cava sub imagine formæ" (feeble beings without a body in the empty semblance of a form).² But the souls of the departed have retained all the characteristics of their former individuality, as far at least as their exterior form is concerned. Æneas relates of Creusa's shade :

"Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusæ
Visa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago."

The unhappy likeness and the shade of Creusa herself and her image larger than life appeared before my eyes.³

Æneas recognised in the lower world not only his father, but also the souls of his companions Leucapsis and Orontes,⁴ of his pilot Palinurus,⁵ of his deserted bride Dido,⁶ of his Trojan comrades,⁷ of Deiphobus,⁸ etc. The last-mentioned case shows also that the souls in Hades bore even the marks of the wounds they had received and other deformities of their former bodies.

Both Homer and Vergil further inform us that souls of dead persons were enabled, under certain circumstances, to return to the upper world and enter into direct communication with living persons. Thus the soul of Patroclus called on his friend Achilles; and not only the shade of Creusa, but also that of Anchises appeared to Æneas. For the latter tells his father :

"Tua me, genitor, tua tristis imago,
Saepius occurrēs, hæc limina tendere adegit."

¹ Od. XI. 204 ff.

² Æneid VI. 292 ff.

³ Æneid II. 772 ff.

⁴ Æneid VI. 334.

⁵ Æneid VI. 340.

⁶ Æneid VI. 450.

⁷ Æneid VI. 481.

⁸ Æneid VI. 494 ff.

Thy sad image, O father, presented itself several times and compelled me to proceed to these thresholds.¹

It is very remarkable to what an extent Hebrew, Greek, and Roman ideas on this subject are identical. There lies a long period of development along many lines of human thought and activity between the time when the Homeric poems originated and the golden age of Roman literature. Still, Vergil, in undertaking to represent the popular belief of his contemporaries concerning the "last things," draws practically the same picture as his early predecessor Homer. That cannot be altogether accounted for on the hypothesis of dependence of the later upon the earlier writer. For although it is generally conceded that the Romans borrowed their religious, philosophical, and æsthetic ideas and ideals from the Greeks, that could not have happened if those ideas and ideals had not found a well-prepared soil in the heart of the Romans. Accordingly, I should prefer to say that the Romans adopted the form rather than the substance. The Hebrew writings from which the corresponding Israelitish conceptions have been collected antedate, as generally admitted, the time when the Jews were first brought into intimate contact with the Greek world. The true reason, therefore, why the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans concur in this respect with one another, is not so much dependence of one on the other, but the fact that the human mind which is in all its essentials the same in all ages and races has attempted to solve the same problem under exactly the same conditions. The conclusions they arrived at together with and independently of one another are the only natural and intelligent answer the ancient world with its imperfect knowledge of cosmography was enabled to give. If we should be inclined to find that answer childish and ridiculous, we ought to remember that even at the present day a very large percentage of the individuals of those nations which proudly style themselves civilised and enlightened cherishes virtually the same opinions.

Under these circumstances, we may fairly assume that, just as

¹ Æneid VI. 695 f.

Homer's ideas had not become obsolete among the Greeks and Romans at the beginning of the Christian era, the old Hebrew notions were at that date still in vogue among the Jews in Palestine and elsewhere. This is the more probable, as they occur in the books of the Old Testament which enjoyed a far greater authority among the Jews than the Homeric poems among the Greeks. We are accordingly entitled to assert with a great deal of assurance that the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus believed the shades or phantoms of the dead to have power to come forth out of the depths of the earth and enter into visible and audible communication with the living. Consequently, it is quite possible that the word *πνεῦμα*, Luke xxiv. 37, signifies such a ghost, especially as the phrase *πνεῦμα σάρκας καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει* reminds us very vividly of Homer's statement *οὐκ ἔτι σάρκας τε καὶ ὀστέα ἵνες ἔχουσιν*.

First, however, the question has to be settled whether the word is ever used in that sense. That is apparently not the case in classical Greek. Liddell & Scott's Greek-English Lexicon at least does not furnish a single instance of such a use. In Homer the word *ψυχή*, the Latin equivalent of which is *anima*, is employed exclusively. "Only once is the *θυμός* said to descend into Hades (Iliad vii. 131); but this can only be an oversight or carelessness of expression."¹ The word *πνεῦμα* is not once met with in Homer. But since in the New Testament *πνεῦμα* is the equivalent of *anima* and is used promiscuously with *ψυχή*,² it is likely that it will be found there to mean also the spirit of a dead person. That is, according to Grimm, really the case in Hebr. xii. 23 and 1 Pet. iii. 19. In the first of these passages we read of "the spirits of just men made perfect." 1 Pet. iii. 19 is the famous passage principally quoted in support of the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hades. But it has to be considered as rather doubtful whether *τὰ ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύματα*, mentioned there, are really spirits or dead persons. There are three chief theories as to the true meaning of that term.³

¹ Charles, p. 137, note 2.

² Grimm, *Lexicon Græco-Latinum in Libros N. T.*, p. 361 b.

³ Stevens's *Theology of the New Test.*, p. 304 ff.

One is that the pre-existent Christ, having become embodied in Noah, preached to the men of Noah's time. According to the second, Jesus, during the interval between his death and resurrection, descended into hell and preached to the spirits of the contemporaries of Noah. A third explanation has been advanced by Spitta.¹ He attempts to prove that "the spirits in prison" are the fallen angels of Gen. vi. 1 ff. According to the Book of Enoch, "Enoch, the scribe of righteousness," who represents another incarnation of the pre-existent Messiah, went to them as messenger of God after their incarceration.² Grimm, on the other hand, declares *πνεῦμα*, Luke xxiv. 37, to denote, not the spirit of a dead person, but a "spiritus (*ein Geist*), i. e., natura simplex sc. si non omnis tamen crassioris materiae et concretionis expers, intelligendi, appetendi, decernendi, agendi vi praedita (a simple being, that is to say, one which, if not lacking all concrete substance, is at least free from grosser matter, and is endowed with the faculty of perceiving, desiring, deciding, acting)." Since it is furthermore doubtful whether (Hebr. xii. 23) spirits in Sheol or in heaven are meant, the New Testament does not permit us to form a final decision as to the import of the word in Luke xxii. 37. The same holds true, so far as I know, of the Septuagint.

We shall find it otherwise when we turn our attention to the non-canonical Apocrypha of the second and first centuries before Christ. It is the main purpose of the so often quoted book of Charles to follow up the gradual growth and development of the Jewish eschatological ideas from the oldest times to the first decades of the Christian era. In doing that, he incidentally shows that the word *πνεῦμα* as designating the shades makes its appearance for the first time in the oldest part of the Book of Enoch³ which, as he thinks, was probably written before the year 170 B. C.⁴ Especially frequent is this use of the word in c. xxii., where it occurs in the Greek Enoch fragment not less than nine times.⁵ That

¹ Spitta, *Predigt an die Geister*, 1896, p. 68.

² Enoch xii-xvii.

³ Enoch i-xxxvi.

⁴ Charles, p. 182.

⁵ c. xxii. 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 13; comp. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. III., p. 805.

by no means excludes the employment of the older term *ψυχή*,¹ but the new word is apparently preferred. The very peculiar phrase *τὰ πνεύματα τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν νεκρῶν* (the spirits of the souls of the dead) which is found twice² perhaps indicates the stage of transition. The term *πνεῦμα* in the sense of "spirit of a dead person" belongs henceforth to the theological terminology of the Jews. "Some writers speak only of the spirit and the body, others only of the soul of the body, but some also use either indifferently." "Thus in the oldest writing of the century (the first century B. C.) the departed in Sheol are spoken of as spirits (in Eth. En. xcvi. 10, and likewise in ciii. 3, 4, 8)." "Again, the departed in Sheol are spoken of as 'souls' (cii. 5, 11, ciii. 7)." "On the other hand, in the nearly contemporaneous books of the Similitudes and Psalms of Solomon the term 'spirit' is not used of man at all, but only 'soul.'" "Finally, in the Noachic interpolations only the term 'spirit' is used of man (cf. xli. 8, lx. 4, lxvii. 8, 9, lxxi. 1), and likewise in the Essenic appendix to this book, where it speaks of 'the spirits of the wicked (cviii. 3, 6) and of the righteous' (cviii. 7, 8, 11)."³ Of the further development of this conception, in the course of the first century A. D., Charles judges: "The soul and spirit are regarded as identical in the non-canonical literature of this century." In Jubilee xxiii. 31 the departed are spoken of as 'spirits'; so likewise in the Assumption of Moses."⁴

There is extant in the book on the Jewish War by Josephus⁵ a very instructive anecdote referring to the Jewish belief in ghosts in the age of the New Testament. It reads as follows: "There is a certain place in the moat which surrounds the city (of Machaerus) on the northern side, called Baaras. It produces a root of the same name. Its skin resembles a flame, and it flashes forth at night a bright blaze. When, however, one approaches and wants to take it, it is not easily seized, but escapes and does not stand still, until one pours urine or monthly blood of a woman upon it. But not

¹ Comp. En. ix. 3 and xxii. 3.

² En. ix. 10 and xxii. 3.

³ Charles, p. 232 f.

⁴ Charles, p. 299.

⁵ Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum*, L. VII c. VI § 3.

even then are they that have grasped it free from the danger of death, unless one happens to carry that root suspended from one's hand. It may, however, be captured also in another way, namely, as follows. People dig in a circle around it so that only a very small part of the root remains in the ground. Then they tie a dog to it, and when he rushes to follow the man who bound him to the root, the latter is readily pulled out. But the dog instantly dies, as if offered up instead of the person who intended to carry away the herb. Thereafter those who have taken it have nothing to fear. In spite of so great dangers, it is eagerly sought for on account of one virtue. For the so-called demons, namely the spirits of wicked men, which enter into the living and kill those who obtain no help, it drives out quickly, provided it is only brought near those who are sick." In this passage *πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων πνεύματα* are opposed to *τοῖς ξῶσιν*. It is therefore evident that those *πνεύματα* are spirits of dead persons. That proves, in the first place, that in the age of Josephus the word *πνεῦμα* was still employed in the sense we first observed in the Book of Enoch. In the second place, it also demonstrates that such spirits were popularly believed among the Jews to be in some way or other enabled to return to the scenes of their former existence and trouble the living.

At this point again we have to notice a close resemblance between Jewish and Roman superstitions. Just as the Jews feared spirits of the wicked, so the Romans were afraid of "Larvæ" and "Lemures." "In Roman belief the Larvæ, in contrast to the Lares (the good spirits of the departed), were the souls of dead persons who could find no rest, either owing to their own guilt, or from having met with some indignity, such as a violent death. They were supposed to wander abroad in the form of dreadful spectres, skeletons, etc., and especially to strike the living with madness."¹ The Lemures were similar spectres of the night. "Some writers describe Lemures as the common name for all the spirits of the dead, and divide them into two classes: the Lares, or the souls of good men, and the Larvæ, or the souls of wicked men.

¹ Harper's *Dict. of Class. Lit. and Ant.*, p. 923 b.

But the common idea was that the Lemures and Larvæ were the same. They were said to wander about at night as spectres, and to torment and frighten the living."¹

Accordingly, we cannot be astonished at the fright of Christ's disciples when they beheld their master after his crucifixion. "They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit."² Jesus had suffered a violent death, and that the death of a criminal. The appearance of his ghost, under these circumstances, could but forebode a dire calamity to his adherents.

But while thus far it has been proved that the contemporary usage permits us to understand the word *πνεῦμα*, in the Luke passage, as denoting "a shade from Sheol," it has not yet been established that it must be taken there in that sense. For the word in itself might also mean a spiritual, that is, heavenly, being, an angel. Such is clearly the case, Hebr. i. 13-14, where it reads: "Of which of the angels hath he said at any time, 'Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet'? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" Charles points out that "the fallen angels and demons" in the Book of Enoch "are always spoken of as 'spirits,' the former in xiii. 6, xv. 4, 6, 7, the latter in xv. 9, 11, xvi. 1. The term 'soul' is never used of angels, fallen or otherwise."³ Consequently in order to render it absolutely certain that *πνεῦμα* in Luke xxiv. 37 does not signify a heavenly, spiritual being, but a ghost, we shall have to show that there was a clear and distinct difference between those two classes of supernatural beings, and that the difference consisted in the former possessing a real body of flesh and bones, while the latter were unsubstantial shades.

The ideas of the Hebrews and early Christians as to the nature of the inhabitants of heaven, in distinction from the inhabitants of earth and Sheol, are closely related to their conception of the world in general. Hence, it is necessary to shortly review the cosmography

¹ Harper's *Dict. of Class. Lit. and Ant.*, p. 934 b.

² Luke xxiv. 37.

³ Charles, p. 196.

of the Bible. We learn in the story of creation that the material out of which heaven and earth were carved was an immense body of water, "the deep."¹ That body of water was on the second day cut into two separate parts by the firmament which "divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament."² The waters under the firmament were then, on the third day, caused to subside so that the earth emerged.³ The fourth day witnessed the putting of "the lights in the firmament," an act which, as a matter of course, could not have been performed before that time. For as long as the waters under the firmament washed the sky, the lights would at once have been extinguished.

This account of the creation of the world is entirely consistent with all other Biblical references to the structure and constitution of the world. It is presupposed in the story of the Tower of Babel. There God himself is afraid that the inhabitants of the earth might succeed in erecting such an edifice, by means of which they could have directly ascended into heaven.⁴ In the account of the Deluge we read of "the windows of heaven,"⁵ which were opened in order to allow the waters above the firmament to fall upon the earth in the form of rain. That shows how cleverly the ancient Hebrews explained the to us so extremely simple phenomenon of rain. Passages like those found in Ps. xix., where the sun is said to come out of his chamber as a bridegroom and run his course from one end of the heaven to the other end, and Josh. x. 12 ff., "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed," confirm the impression gained from Gen. i., that sun, moon, and stars are lights which travel daily and nightly their prescribed courses across the firmament of heaven. We are, therefore, justified in stating that, according to the Bible, the world is imagined to be a kind of two-story building, the first floor of which is occupied by the earth and its inhabitants, while the second floor which is formed by the firma-

¹ Gen. i. 2.² Gen. i. 7.³ Gen. i. 9 ff.⁴ Gen. xi. 4 ff.⁵ Gen. vii. 11, viii. 2.

ment which is supported by the earth at its extremities furnishes an abode for God and his angels.

A similar conception of the world prevailed also among the ancient Greeks and Romans. "The world, as conceived of in the *Iliad*, is a round plain encircled by a great river, Oceanus,—not the Atlantic, of which Homer seems to have no knowledge at all, but a purely mythical stream. The sky is a great concave roof propped up by pillars which the mighty Atlas upholds."¹ In fact, all nations and individuals at a certain stage of their development, even at the present day, can but believe in such a world, because that alone agrees with the testimony of their eyes. Children, for instance, imagine the sky to be an azure dome which touches the earth at the horizon. Our language preserves many terms and phrases which, though used by us in a figurative sense, bear witness that our ancestors who coined those terms and phrases shared the world-conception of the old Hebrews.

Some of the more highly educated Greeks and Romans had indeed outgrown that popular belief at the beginning of the Christian era. Even as early as the first part of the fourth century B. C., a Greek astronomer by the name of Eudoxus adduced mathematical proof of the spherical shape of the earth.² But such a knowledge never became common property in the Graeco-Roman world. Moreover, I doubt whether it was considered as much more than an interesting and not improbable hypothesis even in the schools of the philosophers. The Jewish nation which, as far as general culture and civilisation is concerned, was far behind the Greeks and Romans, still clung in the age of Christ with the greatest tenacity to those antediluvian notions.

When the Old Testament was accepted by the Christians as an integral part of their Bible, they likewise received the Biblical doctrine of the shape of the earth, and those views were generally believed not only by the unlearned, but even among the clergy down to the time of Columbus.³ Then, for the first time in the

¹ Harper's *Dict. of Class. Lit. and Ant.*, "Geographia."

² Comp. Aristotle, *De Caelo*, II. 14.

³ Comp. John Fiske, *Discovery of America*, 1894, Vol. I., p. 371.

history of the world, the fact of the sphericity of the earth began to dawn on the common mind. Since, however, they sincerely believed that the Bible contained the Truth and nothing but the Truth, they began to look upon their former interpretation of the Bible with regard to the construction of the world as a mistake and very soon forgot it altogether. At present, a majority of Christians, and among them theologians of world-wide renown, are firmly convinced that the discoveries and teachings of Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Laplace, etc., are in perfect accord with the corresponding teachings of the Bible. They even hail such an imaginary conformity of a new scientific discovery which can no longer be discredited with the Bible as a new proof which establishes beyond question the supernatural origin and the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. The *conditio sine qua non* of such an exegesis is, of course, on the one hand, a pitiable want of insight and trust in the eternal truth of Christ's religion, and on the other hand, a deplorable absence of historical sense.

There is no room for the least doubt as to the explanation of Gen. i. and kindred passages both among Jews and Christians up to the time of the discovery of the American continents. The most important source from which our knowledge of Jewish cosmography in the age of Christ is derived is the Book of Enoch.¹ Dillmann, in the general introduction to his translation of the book,² makes among others the following remarks: "A great part of the secrets which are revealed in the book (especially in its fourth, first, and also second division) refers to objects of visible nature, things which to explain we reckon among the tasks of natural science, botany, geography, astronomy. But the people of Israel of old never had an adequate conception of natural science." "Our author [the author of the Book of Enoch] discusses a number of the most important forces, places, and creatures of the terrestrial and atmospheric world; in the first place, such as are treated of in the Bible or which in the Bible (chiefly in the Book of Job) are ex-

¹ Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 1893.

² A. Dillmann, *Das Buch Henoch*, 1853, p. xv. ff.

pressly represented as secrets surpassing human understanding (as for instance the things mentioned c. xvii., xviii. 1-5 or lightning and thunder).” “To him it is an unquestionable fact that there are chambers for the winds, hail, snow, and rain. He believes in a cornerstone of the earth, in pillars upon which the vault of heaven rests; he believes in the arrows of God and the quivers which belong to them; he believes that countless stores of thunderbolts and lightning are heaped up in heaven, etc. But he believes in those things only because it is thus stated in the Bible (in figurative language).” The term “figurative language” is indeed very familiar to the modern Bible reader. It removes worlds of difficulties in less than no time and is in that respect infinitely superior to that old-fashioned “faith as a grain of mustard seed.” But what we, from our modern point of view, are inclined to regard as figurative and would justly so regard in a modern author, that by the author or authors of the Book of Enoch and their contemporaries and much more so by their predecessors, the authors of the Old Testament included, was meant and understood in its literal sense.

The following selections from the Book of Enoch may serve as samples of that natural science which the Jews and early Christians regarded as divine revelation. “I saw the chambers of all the winds, and I saw how he had furnished with them the whole creation and the firm foundations of the earth. And I saw the cornerstone of the earth, I saw the four winds which bear the earth and the firmament of the heaven. And I saw how the winds stretch out the vaults of heaven and have their station between heaven and earth: these are the pillars of the heaven. And I saw the winds which turn the heaven, which bring the circumference and all the stars to their setting. And I saw the winds on the earth, which carry the clouds; and I saw the paths of the angels: I saw at the end of the earth the firmament of the heaven above.”¹ “I saw a place which had no firmament of the heaven above and no foundation of earth beneath it.”² “This is the first law of the luminaries: the luminary the sun has its rising in the eastern portals of the

¹ Book of Enoch xviii. 1-5.

² B. of E. xviii. 12.

heaven, and its setting in the western portals of the heaven. And I saw six portals out of which the sun rises, and six portals in which the sun sets; the moon also rises and sets through these portals, and the leaders of the stars and those led by them: six in the east and six in the west following each other in accurately corresponding order; also many windows to the right and left of these portals. And first there goes forth the great luminary, named the sun, and his circumference is like the circumference of heaven, and he is quite filled with illuminating and heating fire. The chariots on which he ascends are driven by the wind, and the sun disappears from the heaven as he sets, and returns through the north in order to reach the east, and is so guided that he comes to the appropriate portal and shines in the face of the heaven."¹

The classical Christian interpretation of Biblical cosmography is *χριστιανῶν βίβλος, ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὴν ὀκτάτευχον*. This book was written by the monk Cosmas Indicopleustes somewhere between 530 and 550 A. D. His surname means the Indian traveller. Concerning this curious work, which was composed in confutation of Ptolemy's Geography in eight books, John Fiske² says: "A pleasant book it is after its kind. In his younger days Cosmas had been a merchant, and in divers voyages had become familiar with the coasts of Ethiopia and the Persian Gulf, and had visited India and Ceylon. After becoming a monk at Alexandria, Cosmas wrote his book of Christian geography, maintaining in opposition to Ptolemy, that the earth is not a sphere, but a rectangular plane forming the floor of the universe; the heavens rise on all four sides about this rectangle, like the four walls of a room, these blue walls support a vaulted roof or firmament, in which God dwells with his angels. In the centre of the floor are the inhabited lands of the earth, surrounded on all sides by a great ocean, beyond which, somewhere out in a corner, is the paradise from which Adam and Eve were expelled. In its general shape, therefore, the universe somewhat resembles the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, or a modern

¹ B. of E. lxxii. 2-5.

² John Fiske, *Discovery of America*, Vol. I., p. 265 ff.

‘Saratoga trunk.’ On the northern part of the floor, under the firmament, is a lofty conical mountain, around which the sun, moon, and planets perform their daily revolutions. In the summer the sun takes a turn around the apex of the cone, and is, therefore, hidden only for a short night; but in the winter he travels around the base, which takes longer, and, accordingly, the nights are long. Such is the doctrine drawn from Holy Scripture, says Cosmas, and as to the vain blasphemers who pretend that the earth is a round ball, the Lord hath stultified them for their sins until they impudently prate of Antipodes, where trees grow downward and rain falls upward. As for such nonsense, the worthy Cosmas cannot abide it.”

Fiske adds in a footnote: “Such views have their advocates even now. There still lives, I believe, in England, a certain John Hampden, who with dauntless breast maintains that the earth is a circular plane with centre at the north pole and a circumference of nearly thirty thousand miles where poor misguided astronomers suppose the south pole to be. The sun moves across the sky at a distance of about eight hundred miles. From the boundless abyss beyond the southern circumference, with its barrier of icy mountains, came the waters which drowned the antediluvian world; for, as the author quite reasonably observes, ‘on a globular earth such a deluge would have been physically impossible.’ Hampden’s title is somewhat like that of Cosmas,—*The New Manual of Biblical Cosmography*, London, 1877; and he began in 1876 to publish a periodical called *The Truth-Seeker’s Oracle and Scriptural Science Review*. Similar views have been set forth by one Samuel Rowbotham, under the pseudonym of ‘Parallax,’ *Zetetic Astronomy. Earth Not a Globe. An Experimental Inquiry Into the True Figure of the Earth, Proving it a Plane Without Orbital or Axial Motion, etc.*, London, 1873; and by a William Carpenter, *One Hundred Proofs that the Earth is Not a Globe*, Baltimore, 1885. There is a very considerable quantity of such literature afloat, the product of a kind of mental aberration that thrives upon paradox.”

The real cause of such a phenomenon, however, is not so much “a kind of mental aberration,” as Fiske suggests. Those honest

men are simply misguided by a too sincere and over-consequent trust in the general talk of the pulpit and Christian apologists. When our modern scribes and Pharisees insist on the literal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, they do not for a single moment intend to study the letter of the Bible and surrender unconditionally to the result of such a devout study. They prefer to read and interpret all popular modern views into the Bible, which is by far the easier task and suits the taste of the general public much better. The consequence is that those poor wretches who are honest in their earnest desire of discovering the true sense and meaning of the word are put down as lunatics. They ought, of course, to have sense enough to know that religion and natural science are two incommensurable quantities, that they belong to two entirely different and mutually independent spheres of human life. They ought also to keep in mind the important fact that the Bible, according to true Protestant principles at least, was never intended to serve as source and canon of all human knowledge and information, but exclusively of religious knowledge; and even there we must carefully distinguish between a purely intellectual acquaintance with the religious contents of the Bible and acceptance of the same, on the one side, and a living faith in Jesus Christ and God, on the other side.

The necessary counterpart of such a primitive conception of the terrestrial world is a similar primitive conception of heaven, that is, the world above the firmament. That appeared already in the above quoted passages from the Book of Enoch, and is stated elsewhere in that writing even more distinctly. For instance, the heavenly palace of God is described as follows: "I drew nigh to a wall which is built of crystals and surrounded by a fiery flame: and it began to affright me. And I went into the fiery flame and drew nigh to a large house which was built of crystals: and the walls of that house were like a mosaic crystal floor, and its groundwork was of crystal. Its ceiling was like the path of the stars and lightnings, with fiery cherubim between in a transparent heaven. A flaming fire surrounded the walls of the house, and its portal blazed with fire. And I entered into that house, and it was hot as fire and cold as ice; there was no delights of life therein: fear covered

me and trembling got hold upon me. And as I quaked and trembled, I fell upon my face and beheld in a vision. And lo! there was a second house, greater than the former, all the portals of which stood open before me, and it was built of flames of fire. And in every respect it so excelled in splendor and magnificence and extent that I cannot describe to you its splendor and its extent. And its floor was fire, and above it were lightnings and the path of stars, and its ceiling also was flaming fire. And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as hoarfrost, its circuit was as a shining sun and the voices of cherubim, and from underneath the great throne came streams of flaming fire so that it was impossible to look thereon."¹ The difference between heaven and earth is, accordingly, not so much one in kind, but rather one in degree. Heaven and its palaces surpass earth and its buildings "in splendor, magnificence, and extent." But however much more splendid the former are, the material of which they consist is such as occurs also on earth.

Those heavenly mansions were inhabited by God and his holy angels, God as the supreme ruler and the angels as the first of his subjects. The term "Lord of Spirits" is frequently used as attribute of God in the Book of Enoch. The outward appearance of God is that of a very old man. In one place we read: "There I saw one who had a head of days, and his head was white like wool."² Elsewhere he is said to be: "the head of days, his head white and pure as wool and his raiment indescribable;"³ at still another place: "His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and could behold the face of the honored and glorious One, and no flesh could behold him."⁴

The angels of the Book of Enoch are likewise beings resembling man. We read for instance: "There came forth from heaven beings who were like men."⁵ Lamech, announcing to his father Methuselah the birth of his son Noah, says: "I have begotten a

¹ Book of Enoch xiv. 9-19.

² Book of Enoch xlii. 1.

³ Book of Enoch lxxi. 10.

⁴ B. of E. xiv. 20-21.

⁵ B. of E. lxxxvii. 2.

strange son: he is not like man, but resembles the children of the angels of heaven; and his nature is different, and he is not like us, and his eyes are as the rays of the sun and his countenance is glorious."¹ Methuselah in turn reports the wonderful event to his father Enoch. "Unto Lamech my son there hath been born a son, whose form and nature are not like man's nature, and the color of his body is whiter than snow and redder than a blooming rose, and the hair of his head is whiter than white wool, and his eyes are like the rays of the sun, and he opened his eyes and thereupon he lighted up the whole house. And when he was taken from the hands of the midwife, he opened his mouth and blessed the Lord of heaven."² It is clear from this description of the new-born son of Lamech that angels were supposed to look like men, as far as the shape of their body is concerned, but to differ from them by the brilliancy of the color of their skin, the extraordinary whiteness of their hair, and the supernatural radiancy of their eyes.

The angels of the Book of Enoch are "spiritual"³ beings, or spirits. That term, however, by no means implies that they are to be conceived as incorporeal, unsubstantial beings. They enjoy the possession of bodies fully as real and tangible as human bodies, although their bodies consist of much finer material. For that reason they are also in need of clothing, and are "clothed in white."⁴ "Their garments were white and their raiment and their faces shone like snow."⁵ They were able to enter, even in their spiritual state, into sexual intercourse with "the daughters of men." The marriage of the angels and the daughters of men which interested the author of the Book of Enoch and his contemporaries so intensely is related at greater length in the first part of the book.⁶ It is also mentioned in a very repugnant manner, demonstrating, however, the grossness of the materialism of Jewish theological conceptions so much the better, in the following passage: "I saw many stars descend and cast themselves down from heaven, and they became bulls among those cattle and (remained) with them, pasturing

¹ B. of E. cvi. 5.

² B. of E. cvi. 10 f.

³ B. of E. xv. 4, 6, 7.

⁴ B. of E. xc. 31.

⁵ B. of E. lxxi. 1.

⁶ B. of E. c. vi. ff.

among them. And I looked at them and saw, and behold they all let out their privy members, like horses, and began to cover the cows of the oxen, and they all became pregnant and bare elephants, camels, and asses."¹ The metamorphosis of the stars who became bulls does not necessarily mean in this case that the angels actually changed their bodies when they married earthly women. This feature belongs rather to the allegorical style of that part of the Book of Enoch from which the passage has been taken. For, in the first part, the fallen angels are expressly addressed: "Whilst ye were still spiritual, holy, in the enjoyment of eternal life, ye have defiled yourselves with women, have begotten (children) with the blood of flesh, and have lusted after the blood of men, and produced flesh and blood, as those produce them who are mortal and short-lived."²

Views such as these are often supposed to denote a degeneration of the originally pure teachings of the Bible. But even according to the Old Testament, God was believed to resemble man or rather man to resemble God. For God created man in his own image.³ The likeness between God and man is not so much one of the mind, the intellect, or spirit, but in the first place, of the shape and appearance of the body. For, however much we may dislike such anthropomorphic representations of God, the Old Testament makes God take a walk in the garden in the cool of the day,⁴ just as if he had suffered from the heat of noontide. He came to Abraham, accompanied by two of his angels, looking like a man, and partook of ordinary food, cakes, veal, butter, and milk.⁵ At Sodom the two angels went into Lot's house where they sat down to a feast and ate among other things unleavened bread.⁶ The wicked inhabitants of Sodom did not for a moment suspect the true character of Lot's guests. Otherwise, they would not have demanded that Lot should bring "the men" out to them.⁷ God himself again wrestled in the form of a man with Jacob, and his muscles on that occasion proved so strong and palpable that the hollow of the patriarch's thigh was strained, causing him to halt

¹ B. of E. lxxxvi. 4.

² B. of E. xv. 4.

³ Gen. i. 27, ix. 6.

⁴ Gen. iii. 8.

⁵ Gen. xviii. 1 ff.

⁶ Gen. xix. 3.

⁷ Gen. xix. 5.

upon his thigh.¹ These references could be multiplied at will not only from the Pentateuch, but also from other books of the Old Testament down to the Book of Daniel.

We do not, of course, experience the least difficulty in explaining away these too human traits in the Old Testament conception of God. They are simply the poetical ingredients of sacred legend, or have to be understood according to their deeper, truer meaning. But we ought not to overlook the significant fact that former, less critically disposed, generations of Christians were not disturbed by the literal meaning of those Bible passages. The Old Testament God and his angels therefore possess real, though heavenly, bodies, of which the human body is a copy. That such beings must have been able to mingle sexually with human beings is easy to see. Accordingly, we cannot wonder to learn from Gen. vi. 1 ff. that such an act really occurred. That "the sons of God," mentioned there, are angels and not representatives of some other race of men, follows not alone from the Book of Enoch, but from Gen. vi. 1-2 directly, as has been proved conclusively by Budde.²

The conception of the nature and form of God has evidently neither changed nor developed in the interval which lies between the date of the Book of Genesis, or its component parts, and that of the Book of Enoch. Aside from his moral character, the principal difference is that God has grown more transcendental in the latter writing. He has ceased absolutely to enter into direct communication with mortals. Even Enoch, as long as he was a mere man, could behold him only in a vision.³ Not before he had been transfigured was he ushered into the presence of God.⁴ That process of transfiguration which ended Enoch's earthly career is described at the end of the second section of our present Book of Enoch. "My whole body melted away, but my spirit was transfigured."⁵ Thereupon he is greeted by "the Head of Days" with the words: "Thou art the son of man who art born unto righteousness," etc.⁶

¹ Gen. xxxii. 25 ff.

³ B. of E. xiv. 14.

⁵ B. of E. lxxi. 11.

² Budde, *Bibl. Urgeschichte*, 1883, p. 3

⁴ B. of E. lxxi. 11.

⁶ B. of E. lxxi. 14.

While Enoch still retained the form and appearance of his former human body—he is still a “son of man,”—the substance of his spiritual body had been rendered heavenly by the process of melting away all grosser matter. This episode is based on the statement in Genesis:¹ “Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” This has been interpreted as indicating that Enoch did not die, and that consequently his soul did not descend into Hades, but that he ascended into heaven bodily. The prophet Elijah is the other man of whom the Old Testament tells us that he was carried into heaven by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire which was drawn by horses of fire.² The later Jews very probably believed that also other righteous men had been taken up into heaven directly, before the soul had left the body. One of them was Moses, as must be concluded from the Gospel account of Christ’s transfiguration³ and from the title of the Apocryphal writing, called “Assumptio Mosis.” The legend possibly was based on the statement, occurring in Deut. xxxiv. 6, that “no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.” The ancient Jews were in blissful ignorance of those laws of nature which prevent at least our bodies from going up into heaven. Enoch, for example, made quite extensive journeys in heaven, even before his transfiguration had taken place.

Also these ideas are closely akin to the conception of the world and nature of the gods we find in the Homeric poems, conceptions which, as Vergil’s *Æneid* demonstrates, were still generally accepted in the age of Augustus. Olympus, the home of the gods, was high above the clouds. When angry Zeus hurled Hephæstus from heaven, the unlucky smith kept falling for a whole day, until at length he landed on terra firma.⁴ In Olympus each god had his own palace where he passed the nights in sleep.⁵ In the morning they assembled in the banquet hall of their father Zeus and partook of nectar and ambrosia.⁶ Whenever they chose, they were enabled to assume a human body and to partake of human food.

¹ Gen. v. 24.

² 2 Kings ii. 1–11.

³ Mt. xvii. 3.

⁴ Iliad I., 592 ff.

⁵ Iliad, I., 605 ff.

⁶ Od. V. 93.

Thus Philemon and Baucis entertained Jupiter and Mercury.¹ Like the angels of the old Testament, they could enter into sexual relationship with men and women, and did so like the fallen angels in numerous cases, though with less dire results. Almost all prominent men of antiquity were believed to be natural descendants of gods and goddesses. Even when hidden from human view, the bodies of the gods were exposed to wounds inflicted by earthly weapons. Diomed, for instance, hit with his spear Ares who was fighting on the Trojan side. That wound caused intense pain to the god. He roared as loud as if ten thousand men had clamored all at once, and retreated precipitately into heaven. There Pæan, the heavenly surgeon, had to apply balsam in order to heal the wound.² Hercules, before he gave up the ghost on the funeral pyre, was carried bodily up into heaven and took a seat at the table of the immortals. These ideas had not become at all obsolete in the age of Christ, not even among philosophers. For Plato's realism must have been based on such materialistic conceptions of what we call the spiritual world; and it is well known that Plato's authority was very great even long after the birth of Christ.

So far I have endeavored to elucidate the Jewish ideas concerning the heavenly world and its inhabitants at the beginning of the Christian era exclusively from Jewish sources belonging to the immediately preceding period. It is but proper to apply also to the New Testament in order to discover there to what an extent those ideas were shared by the early Christians. By far the most important reference to our question is found 1 Cor. xv. 35 ff. Saint Paul is generally held to teach there a more spiritual conception of heavenly bodies than even the Synoptic Gospels. It is difficult to understand how that should be possible, taking into consideration the Apostle's Jewish antecedents and his Gentile environment. The Apostle certainly believes that the souls of the dead, the righteous included, sleep in Sheol, waiting there for the day of resurrection.³ He also states that those who shall happen to be alive

¹ Ovid, *Metam.*, VIII., 611 ff.

² Iliad, V. 855 ff.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 52; comp. 1 Thess. iv. 16.

at the time of the Lord's coming "shall be changed,"¹ or what, according to our previous investigation, amounts to the same thing, "shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."² Saint Paul calls indeed the risen body a "spiritual body."³ But the very term "spiritual body" clearly indicates that he employs the word "spiritual" in a sense altogether different from what it signifies to-day. For, according to our way of thinking, the words "spiritual body" are an impossible combination, because a spirit does not have a body. The Apostle must therefore have had another conception of what constitutes a spirit than we have. His spiritual beings inhabiting heaven possessed real bodies. That is confirmed by his definition or rather attempted description of such a spiritual body. While the human body is corruptible, dishonorable, weak, and natural, the resurrection-body, that is, the body of the inhabitants of heaven, is just the opposite, namely, incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual.⁴ These attributes perfectly agree with what we have learned from the Book of Enoch concerning the spirits in heaven.

The discourse of Saint Paul on the resurrection in the First Epistle to the Corinthians is addressed to Christians at Corinth who, though believers in Jesus Christ, denied the resurrection. They were certainly not swayed by Jewish prejudices, but must have been Greeks who had become imbued, probably before their conversion to Christ, with such nominalistic ideas as were taught, for instance, by the Stoics. There can hardly be a doubt that they believed in the immortality of the soul, as against the resurrection of the body. For otherwise the fact that they were members of a Christian church and as such believers in Christ could not be accounted for. Thus, it is not at all the Apostle's purpose to combat grossly materialistic ideas concerning the resurrection-body. Quite on the contrary, he strongly emphasises the fact that the souls of the risen have real bodies, or, in other words, that there is a resurrection of the body. Those who denied the resur-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 52.

² 1 Th. iv. 17.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 44.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 42-44.

rection apparently argued that the dead and buried body could not be raised, because it is subject to decay and dissolution. Saint Paul characterises such a view as sheer foolishness.¹ He had not taught that the buried body was to be raised. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption."²

Such a teaching cannot be said to represent a new Christian revelation, since it occurs already in the Book of Enoch.³ The principal section in which it is found there is assigned by Charles to the years 104-95 B. C.⁴ The second part of the Book of Enoch,⁵ the date of which falls between 94-79 B. C.,⁶ and the Psalms of Solomon which are placed soon after the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey,⁷ that is, 63 B. C., are also quoted in this connexion.⁸ In the Book of Enoch xci-civ, the resurrection stands in close relationship to the creation of a new heaven. Charles states: "To share in this new heaven, the righteous dead will rise; but in the meantime their spirits will be at rest, guarded by angels (c. 5). From this intermediate abode (probably in Sheol, cf. 4 Ezra iv. 41) they will be raised (xc. 10, xcii. 3), but not in the body, but as spirits only (ciii. 3, 4), and the portals of heaven will be opened to them (civ. 2), and they shall joy as the angels (civ. 4), and become companions of the heavenly hosts (civ. 6), and shine as the stars forever" (civ. 2).⁹ In support of the supposition of Charles that the intermediate abode of the righteous is Sheol, the Book of Enoch (cii. 11) could be cited, which refers to the righteous and reads: "Their souls descend into Sheol in tribulation." Charles sums up the result of his investigation in the following statement: "We find that the doctrine of the resurrection, which was current amongst the cultured Pharisees in the century preceding the Christian era, was of a truly spiritual nature."¹⁰

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 36.

² 1 Cor. xv. 50.

³ Book of Enoch xci-civ.

⁴ Charles, *The B. of E.*, p. 264.

⁵ B. of E. xxxvii-lxxi.

⁶ Charles, *The B. of E.*, p. 108.

⁷ Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 86, II., p. 589.

⁸ Charles, *Eschatol.*, p. 425a, III. 1 and 2.

⁹ Charles, *Eschatol.*, p. 206.

¹⁰ Charles, *Eschatol.*, p. 239.

Charles, however, makes a mistake in assuming the word "spirit" in Jewish Apocryphal literature to denote incorporeal beings when it refers to the inhabitants of heaven. As it has been demonstrated that the angels have bodies and are spirits, and as we are expressly told in the Book of Enoch of the righteous that "they will all become angels in heaven,"¹ we cannot escape the conclusion that the Jews in the last century B. C. believed the risen spirits of the righteous to be clothed with real bodies, though not with bodies of flesh and blood. When Charles further asserts in the passage quoted above that the righteous will be raised "not in the body, but as spirits only," he fails entirely to prove that such a distinction is made in the Book of Enoch. The only passage to which he refers does not contain anything concerning the body. It reads: "All goodness and joy and glory are prepared for them and are written down for the spirits of those who have died in righteousness, and that manifold good will be given to you in recompense for your labors, and that your lot is abundantly beyond the lot of the living. And your spirits (the spirits) of you who die in righteousness, will live and rejoice and be glad, and their spirits will not perish, but their memorial will be before the face of the Great One unto all the generations of the world."² The raised just ones of the Book of Enoch are indeed spirits, that means, have spiritual bodies. That, however, is exactly what the Apostle Paul asserts in his First Epistle to the Corinthians. The example of Charles shows that we can hardly be careful enough in reading and explaining books like the Book of Enoch and other writings of the same period, lest we reflect present day notions and conceptions back into that early age.

It may even be doubted whether the cultured Pharisees of the age of Christ believed at all in the resurrection of the buried body, or the resurrection of the flesh. Saint Paul certainly does not. Neither does the Book of Enoch contain any indication to that effect. On the contrary, the description of Enoch's transfiguration, where his flesh is said to have melted away, points in the opposite

¹ Book of Enoch li. 4.

² Book of Enoch ciii. 3-4.

direction. The answer Jesus gave the Sadducees concerning the state in the resurrection of the woman who had had seven husbands does not imply that Jesus differed from the Pharisees. The question of the Sadducees represents simply a caricature of the Pharisaic belief. That, however, does not exclude the possibility that such views were cherished by the less intelligent. It is, of course, difficult for us not to confound the modern and ancient meaning of the terms "body" and "spirit." But realising that in antiquity they did not exclude one another, as they do at present, it is my impression that Saint Paul together with the cultured Pharisees of his age expected not the buried body, but the soul bearing the image of the buried body, to rise from Sheol in order to be clothed with a glorified heavenly body.

In looking over the theological literature of the present century, I find that Van Oosterzee has admirably succeeded in defining the Biblical term "spiritual body." For he describes the Lord's resurrection-body, which according to Saint Paul is the image of our own heavenly body,¹ as follows: "It is palpable, not only as a whole, but also in its different parts; raised above space, so that it can in much shorter time than we transport itself from one locality to another; gifted with the capability, in subjection to a mightier will, of being sometimes visible, sometimes invisible. It bears the unmistakable traces of its former condition, but is at the same time raised above the confining limitations of this. It is, in a word, a spiritual body, no longer subject to the flesh, but filled, guided, borne by the spirit, yet not less a body. It can eat, but it no longer needs to eat; it can reveal itself in one place, but is not bound to this one place; it can show itself within the sphere of this world, but is not limited to this sphere."²

There are two different ways in which those heavenly beings might reveal themselves to human eyes. They could either appear in their spiritual, glorified body, or they could lay aside their heavenly splendor. In the latter case, they looked exactly like ordinary

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 49.

² J. J. Van Oosterzee, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1870, p. 398.

mortals and were easily mistaken for such. For that reason the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews admonishes his readers, "to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."¹ Such incognito visits of the inhabitants of heaven on earth were naturally the rule. For the splendor of heavenly bodies was much too great for human eyes to endure. When therefore God had resolved to become manifest to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai, he enveloped himself in a thick cloud.² But even then, man and beast had to keep at a safe distance from the foot of the mountain in order to avoid death.³ Moses, who alone was found worthy to stand in the presence of God, had to veil his face after he returned from such an interview. For it reflected so brilliant a light that the children of Israel were not able to draw near and look at him.⁴ The idea that to behold God face to face meant instant death is met with in the oldest parts of the Old Testament. Manoah, Sampson's father, for instance, tells his wife in the Book of Judges⁵: "We shall surely die, because we have seen God."

The testimony of the New Testament as to the nature of the appearances of the risen Christ is to the same effect. According to the Gospel accounts of the resurrection, his body on those occasions resembled his former human body, and even bore the marks of the cruel wounds which had been inflicted upon him on the cross. Extraordinary brightness of face and garments, such as distinguished him during his transfiguration, when: "His face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light,"⁶ are not mentioned. On the contrary, it is expressly stated that he was mistaken by his most intimate friends once for a gardener⁷ and another time for a stranger.⁸ The only supernatural features connected with Christ's appearances after his resurrection are the suddenness of his coming and going, and the fact that he became visible in a carefully closed room.⁹ On the other hand, when Saint

¹ Heb. xiii. 2.

² Ex. xix. 7, 18,

³ Ex. xix. 12, comp. Ex. xix. 21, 24.

⁴ Ex. xxxiv. 29-35, comp. 2 Cor. iii. 7.

⁵ Jud. xiii. 22, comp. Ex. xxxiii. 22 ff.

⁶ Mt. xvii. 2.

⁷ John xx. 15.

⁸ Luke xxiv. 13 ff.

⁹ John xx. 19, 26.

Paul was called to his apostleship, Jesus revealed himself in his heavenly form and character. "The light out of heaven" which shone suddenly round about Paul was undoubtedly the splendor which emanated from the glorified, spiritual body of Christ, which was, as we know, brighter than the light of the sun. The result was that Saint Paul "was three days without sight."¹

The fact that angels who appeared among men in human form ate human food proves that they were not mere spectres, but could indeed be said to be possessed of "flesh and bones." For that peculiar phrase by no means indicates a mortal body. The terms used in the New Testament to denote a human being as to its mortal nature are "flesh" and "flesh and blood," never "flesh and bones." The latter phrase occurs only in Luke xxiv. 39. It is the more significant, because, according to old Hebrew ideas, the blood is the seat of animal life.² The combination of the two words "flesh and bones" is therefore very far from conveying the impression that the body of the risen Christ was an ordinary human body. The stress lies entirely on the reality and palpability of that body in order to overcome the fear that Jesus was a spectre from Sheol. Having become assured as to this fact, the disciples could but believe that their crucified Lord had risen from the dead, and was now living in that state of heavenly glory which properly belonged to him as the Messiah, the true Son of God.

Our investigation has so far rendered it quite clear that the word *πνεῦμα* in Luke can but denote a ghost and not a spiritual being from heaven. For ghosts only were believed to be incorporeal beings. Consequently, the Gospel according to Luke cannot be quoted in support of the view that the resurrection of Jesus was nothing but a resuscitation from apparent, but not real, death. Such an idea is without question utterly foreign to the whole New Testament.

This explanation is supported by very old authorities. Codex D, for example, reads in our passage *φάντασμα* instead of *πνεῦμα*, and Ignatius furnishes a highly interesting paraphrase of the Luke

¹ Acts ix. 9.

² Charles, *Esch.*, p. 87.

passage, showing in quite unmistakable language how it was understood by the early Christians, or, to be more exact, in the first half of the second century. According to the martyr-bishop of Antiochia, the risen Christ told those who were with Peter: *λάβετε, ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον* (touch and handle me and see that I am not an incorporeal demon).¹ Of recent commentators of the Luke-Gospel who adopt this explanation of *πνεῦμα* in Luke xxiv. 37 Plummer may be mentioned.² He has at the same time reached the conclusion that the risen Christ was not a man, but a heavenly being. His words to this effect are as follows: "The alternative—'either a ghost, or an ordinary body needing food'—is false. There is a third possibility: a glorified body, capable of receiving food." I hope to have proved definitely that this third possibility alone agrees with the contemporary Jewish and Christian ideas as to the condition of man after death and to the nature of heavenly beings not less than with the peculiar phraseology of the passage in question. It must of course be conceded that it is extremely easy to misunderstand that passage, if one is unfamiliar with Jewish eschatology; and Ignatius in the already quoted chapter of his epistle to the Smyrneans furnishes the oldest misconception on record. For after citing the words uttered by Jesus, he proceeds to say: *καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτοῦ ἤψαντο, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν κραθέντες τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ αἵματι* (and they at once touched him and believed, because they had handled his flesh and blood). The phrase "flesh and blood," if occurring in Luke, would indeed demonstrate that Christ's resurrection was, at least according to that passage thus changed, nothing but the entirely natural process of an awakening from a deep deathlike trance. Ignatius, of course, has not the least intention of making such a statement. He rather goes on to say: *μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν συνέφαγεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνέπιεν ὡς σαρκικός, καί περ πνευματικῶς ἡνωμένος τῷ πατρὶ* (after his resurrection he ate and drank with them, as if he had been a being of flesh, although he was spiritually one with the Father).

¹ Ignatius, *Smyrn.*, III. 2.

² Alfred Plummer, *Commentary on the Gospel According to Luke*, 1896, p. 559 ff.

We are now in a position in which we are enabled to decide intelligently what the first Christians really believed as to the resurrection of Christ, and what of this their belief has to be acknowledged as truly Christian. We have seen that they held, to our way of thinking, certain very peculiar views concerning the body of the risen Christ. These views, however, very far from having been newly revealed to them, the first Christians had received from their Jewish forefathers, who in turn shared them with other ancient peoples. It must be acknowledged that they represent the only way in which the ancient world was enabled to think and speak of the fact that a man after his demise had become partaker of the life everlasting which is a characteristic attribute of the Godhead and implies divine nature and direct and intimate intercourse with the Deity. That God possessed a body, though a glorified body, and that consequently the risen Christ had to be a corporeal being, was so natural and self-evident an idea in the eyes of the early Christians as well as their contemporaries that, in the New Testament, not the least effort is made to emphasise it. If it were not for the Old Testament and the Apocryphal literature, we might well be justified in overlooking the real meaning of the rather few and casual remarks found in the New Testament concerning the corporeity of the risen Christ.

On the other hand, the specifically Christian side of the Easter Message of the Apostolic Church must be found in the statement that the crucified Jesus has risen, or, in other words, has revealed his eternal life and thus established his everlasting Messiahship beyond the possibility of a doubt. If it were necessary to prove that explicitly, one might quote what, according to the Acts, forms the very gist of the first public testimony of Christ's resurrection.¹ Saint Peter is there recorded as having said: "Jesus of Nazareth . . ., being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men (or perhaps better: 'by the hand of heathen') did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible that he

¹ Acts ii. 14-36.

should be holden of it."¹ "This Jesus did God raise up."² "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye have crucified."³ The resurrection accordingly proves that Jesus is the Lord and Christ in spite of his crucifixion. This is not alone the case in Saint Peter's Pentecost address, but in all similar speeches preserved in the Acts. Everywhere invariably the same argument is employed.⁴ And the hearers, with the exception only of the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers of Athens⁵ and the Roman governor Festus at Cæsarea,⁶ agreed with the apostles beforehand as to the possibility of a resurrection *in abstracto*.

It cannot be pronounced emphatically enough that it is not the Easter-event as such, but rather the conclusions deduced therefrom which were uppermost in the minds of the first Christians. That is also confirmed by the evident and otherwise unexplainable carelessness with which they have handed down the details of the Easter-event to posterity. There are five different traditions contained in the last chapters of the four Gospels and the first verses of 1 Cor. xv. respectively. But no two of these accounts can be made to agree with one another, the differences in many instances being of a most serious character. Yet all these difficulties disappear at once, when we recognise that the apostles are perfectly unanimous in defining the truly Christian contents of their Easter-message. It is the life everlasting of Jesus the crucified, which has become manifest through his appearances after his death and burial, in which they rejoice. Thus we read in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans: "We know that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once; but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God."⁷ The first and unquestionably orthodox Christian Easter-faith was neither more nor less than the strongest

¹ Acts ii. 22 ff.

² Acts ii. 32.

³ Acts ii. 36.

⁴ Comp. Acts iii. 14 ff. 18-26, iv. 10 ff., v. 30 ff., x. 39 ff., 42, xiii. 28-30, 32 xvii. 31, xxvi. 23.

⁵ Acts xvii. 18, 32.

⁶ Acts xxvi. 24.

⁷ Rom. vi. 9-10.

possible assertion, adapted to the new circumstances and conditions which had arisen in consequence of his crucifixion, that Jesus had been, still was, and would be forever, the true Messiah; or, as the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews formulates it: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."¹

The question why the first disciples of Christ held that belief is easy to answer. They had, in the course of their acquaintance with Jesus, even before his last journey to Jerusalem, arrived at the conclusion that their beloved and honored master was "the Christ,"² "the Holy One of God."³ His apparent defeat and ignominious death had at first rudely shaken that conviction. But when soon after his crucifixion he began to show himself to his adherents, their previous faith in him awoke with renewed vigor and could henceforth no more be weakened. They had seen their living Lord with their own eyes. The enthusiasm of their Easter-faith proved irresistible. Hundreds and thousands of people listened with a willing and eager ear to their testimony of Jesus Christ. Their own moral judgment corroborated the claim of his apostles that he had words of eternal life. On the other hand, the message of his resurrection contained nothing strange to their way of thinking and incompatible with their knowledge of the universe. Even if the risen Christ did not become visible to them, he had been seen by so many absolutely trustworthy persons that the fact of his resurrection could not be doubted. Moreover, it was but an insignificantly short time until he was to return in his state of heavenly glory in the sight of the whole world, in order to complete the work which he had begun in a state of human infirmity and humbleness. Up to that blissful moment, those who had learned to trust in him consoled and strengthened one another with that beatitude, said to have been pronounced by the risen Lord: "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed!"⁴

Such is in short the truly Christian aspect of the Easter-faith of the first believers in Christ. It is the firmly rooted, unshakable

¹ Hebr. xiii. 8.

² Mark viii. 39, comp. Mt. xvi. 15, Luke ix. 20.

³ John vi. 69.

⁴ John xx. 29.

conviction of the life eternal of the crucified Jesus as the Messiah and is based, on the one hand, upon a hearty approval of and belief in his work and teachings, and, on the other hand, on his appearances before his disciples which occurred for some time after his death, beginning on the so-called day of resurrection and ending with the conversion, or perhaps better, call, of the apostle Paul.

It remains to be seen how we are concerned in such a definition of the primitive Christian Easter-faith. The first condition, now as then, of a true belief in the Easter-message, as will readily be granted, is an intimate acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth on the part of the would-be believer. The risen Christ, according to the New Testament, revealed himself only to such as had known him before. Saint Peter tells us:¹ "God raised (Jesus) up the third day and gave him to be manifest not unto all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even unto us." Saint Paul's conversion forms only apparently an exception to this rule. For, as a matter of fact, he must have been pretty thoroughly informed as to Jesus Christ, even before he met him face to face. Otherwise, the hatred displayed by Saul against the adherents of Jesus could not be accounted for, and much less the remarkable phenomenon that, immediately after his conversion, he became an apostle of Jesus Christ, without any special instruction or other preparation for that calling.²

Intimate acquaintance with Jesus Christ among us does not necessarily imply a study of what we call Lower and Higher Criticism. Such strictly theological researches serve exclusively the purpose of teaching the preacher and religious teacher how to separate the chaff from the wheat in that great discordant mass of religious tradition which has come down to us as the inheritance of nineteen centuries of Church History. Studies of this kind are to a very large extent critical and negative. The general public, however, demands and has a right to demand first of all the positive truth. It does not care for the chaff nor for what is done with it; it wants the wheat and nothing but the real stuff. It is a grave

¹ Acts x. 40 ff.

² Gal. i. 16.

mistake when critical scholars attempt to popularise the negative results of their investigations which according to their very nature cannot be properly valued and appreciated by the layman. The mistake is only less serious than the attempts of their opponents to persuade their followers that the Bible is the infallible source and fountain-head of all knowledge and information religious and otherwise, or that the doctrines of a certain Church represent the full truth concerning Christ's religion and nothing but that truth. Both parties confound true religious faith with purely intellectual information concerning religious problems and prevent their disciples from attaining the former. It is only the preacher and religious teacher whose calling requires them to be thoroughly conversant with both the positive and negative side of our religious faith.

The next and final step towards the acquisition of a truly Christian Easter-faith is a distinct vision of the living Christ. The necessity of such an experience is almost universally overlooked. We hear it even frequently stated that we are excluded from it. It is indeed true that we cannot expect to behold the risen Christ in that form in which the Apostles are reported to have seen him. It has become absolutely impossible for us to believe in a real and palpable corporeity of the risen Lord. But our investigation into the origin of that belief justifies us in criticising and even rejecting that purely accidental feature of the early Christian Easter-faith, without incurring the odium of attacking a specifically Christian revelation and being thus an enemy and destroyer of the true faith in Christ. Present conditions not only permit, but even compel, us to exercise sound judgment and solid common sense in this case.

When we read in Homer of the gods and goddesses of the Greeks we do not for a single moment imagine that they ever were what Homer believed them to be. We do not even deem it necessary to explain our disbelief in them. We are perfectly aware that we are dealing with creatures of human imagination, an imperfect and miscarried attempt to approach and solve the momentous and eternal problem of God. Therefore those anthropomorphic representations of the gods do not even arouse a smile of indulgence on

the part of the modern reader. Their childlikeness combined with their great antiquity renders them much too sacred and venerable for even such a faint indication of disapproval. That mental attitude, however, would change the first moment we should be asked to accept those, from a purely æsthetical standpoint, so pleasing myths as a true and adequate description of the spiritual, heavenly world in which we must believe. We should reject such a preposterous proposition with the utmost scorn and point out indignantly the puerile childishness and utter impossibility of that system. Exactly the same result is bound to be produced when we insist upon claiming divine authority for that side of the primitive belief in Christ's resurrection which, very far from having been for the first time taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, marks but the imperfect conception of the visible and invisible world which was characteristic of that age. Besides, in thus trying to hold apart shell and kernel, form and substance, we ought not to forget that the first Christians' cosmography had as little to do with their religious faith as, for instance, our knowledge of the shape of the earth with our religious convictions. There are undoubtedly today many excellent Christians who have only very vague ideas as to the sphericity of our planet and its place in the solar system.

But the claim may perhaps be raised that we need not behold the risen Christ with our own eyes, because the Bible assures us of the reality of his resurrection; and men like Edersheim tell us of the Easter-event that it "may unhesitatingly be pronounced the best established in history."¹ Such a sweeping statement, however, can no longer pass unchallenged. Not to speak of the nowadays tabooed criticism of Reimarus, Lessing, and Strauss, the present state of the Synoptic problem, as viewed by conservative scholars, peremptorily forbids it. We know that the principal portion of the narrative element in the first three Gospels must have been derived from a common source, which is almost identical with our Gospel according to Mark. That all three Synoptists have adopted this common source shows how highly it was esteemed in

¹ Edersheim, *Life and Time of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II., p. 626.

the early Church. But this oldest and consequently most trustworthy gospel-narrative apparently did not contain anything like an explicit account of Christ's resurrection. For Mark's resurrection story is very short, and the differences between Mark and the other two are considerable. According to Mark, the risen Christ did not show himself to his disciples at Jerusalem, but had them instructed to meet him in Galilee. According to Matthew, the meeting of Jesus and the eleven disciples indeed took place in Galilee; but Jesus had first informed the two Marys at Jerusalem that he wished his disciples to return to Galilee. Curiously enough Jesus appeared to those women after exactly the same commandment had been given them by an angel. In Luke and John all the appearances of the risen Christ take place at Jerusalem. The scene of John xxi. is, indeed, the sea of Tiberias; but that chapter is a later appendix to the Fourth Gospel, as is now generally admitted. These discrepancies, not to mention that no two apparitions of the risen Christ in any of the four Gospels are identical, prove that our present Gospel accounts of Christ's resurrection are of relatively late origin. Almost the only point on which they agree is that the grave in which the dead body of Christ had been deposited was found empty on the morning of Easter Sunday.

The earliest account of the resurrection is found in 1 Cor. xv. 3-8. It is of unquestioned authenticity. Its author, as a contemporary and fellow-countryman of the eye-witnesses, was in a position enabling him to ascertain the real facts correctly and comprehensively. At the same time his apostolic office and the special circumstances which induced him to write 1 Cor. xv. are a sufficient guarantee that his account is true in all its details as well as exhaustive. He mentions six different appearances of the risen Christ. It is of comparatively little importance that they do not coincide with those mentioned in any of the Gospels taken separately or in all the Gospels collectively. For what Saint Paul does not tell us is even more remarkable than what he relates, if we compare it with the Gospel accounts. In the first place, he does not mention that the risen Lord has been seen by any women. They say of course that the Apostle of the Gentiles was a misogynist. For he

prescribed: "*Mulier taceat in ecclesia!*" ("Let the women keep silence in the churches!")¹ He did not want women to occupy, as we should express it, the pulpit. But that cannot mean that he should have refused to accept the testimony of a woman who had followed Christ as to the resurrection of the Lord. That Saint Paul quite forgets to testify as to the empty tomb is even more important. In the Gospel accounts it clearly demonstrates that the human body of Christ had risen, and the eleventh article of the Apostles' Creed declares in perfect harmony with the Gospels: "*Credo in Carnis Resurrectionem*" (I believe in the resurrection of the flesh). Saint Paul, on the other hand, denies in 1 Cor. xv. 35 ff. expressly and explicitly the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh. Accordingly, he cannot have known that the grave had been found empty. Otherwise, he would suppress the truth in the interest of a pet theory of his which was not shared by the other apostles and which was at variance with the actual event. These discrepancies go very far to show how difficult, if not impossible, it is to establish on the hand of our sources the real facts of Christ's resurrection; and therefore we dare not base on a foundation so insecure our Easter faith which has to be as firm and stable as that of the first Christians.

But even if we should be willing to overlook all these perplexities and cling to the simple and undoubted fact that the apostles of Christ are true witnesses of the resurrection, we could not thereby approach one step nearer to the true and living Easter-faith. The word and testimony of the apostles is certainly unassailable. But, in the best case, it proves neither more nor less than that Jesus lived at that time when his disciples saw him. What we need is certainty that he lives to-day. But what did the first Christians know about the beginning of the twentieth century? They never expected this old, rotten world to go on for nineteen hundred years more. They confidently looked toward a speedy return of their glorified master.

All these reasons and considerations compel us to state in the

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

plainest possible language that in order to be enabled to believe at present in the everlasting life of Jesus Christ, we must see with our own eyes that he lives and dwells in our midst. Such an experience has of course to be different from what the first Christians saw. For if Jesus would come to us in his former shape and body, we should certainly fail to recognise him, having not the least idea how he looked. If he would show himself in his heavenly splendor, so that there could not be any doubt as to his identity, the sceptical spirit of the age would prevent us from trusting our own senses. We should regard Christ's appearance merely as a dream or vision void of all reality and religious meaning. The life eternal of Jesus Christ has accordingly to be revealed to us in an indirect way.

Life and activity are, as we look upon them, reciprocal terms. Where there is life there is activity, and where activity prevails there is life. A thorough acquaintance with the life work of Jesus renders us capable of judging whether that work has come to a standstill or is still producing the same effects it was designed by Christ himself to bring about. In order to decide this question, we have to note present conditions and past development of the Christian nations and compare them with the non-Christian peoples. We have also to take into account the ideals which mould the destiny of the Christian nations and determine what influence they exercised upon their history. These ideals are as a matter of course not only those professed by devout Christians, but those of all the acknowledged leaders of men in all the various fields of human activity. If such an investigation and comparison will prove that the ideas and ideals of Jesus Christ control the life of the modern Christian nations, that they rank on the scale of progress and civilisation in exact proportion to their more or less thorough acceptance of the yoke and burden of Christ, if we discover that their greatest men are at the same time also the most Christ-like, we will become clearly conscious that he lives in truth among us. We shall behold him incarnated, more or less perfectly of course, in many of our fellow-men. Nay, we shall have to recognise it as the

chief task of our individual existence to become true and perfect representatives of the living Christ.

Such an Easter faith cannot be disturbed by the squabbles and wrangles of hostile theological schools and rival churches. It is a blissful personal experience independent of all bookish knowledge and hearsay belief. At the same time it is entirely consistent with our present knowledge of the universe and with our observation of the never-dying influence the life of a great man exercises upon his fellow-men and even more so upon the succeeding generations; and a statement to this effect which I have somewhere met with may easily be applied to the case of Jesus Christ. It reads: "A noble human life does not end on earth with death. It continues in the minds and the deeds of friends, as well as in the thought and activity of the nation."¹ This again is a commentary on Faust's lines:

"Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdentagen
Nicht in Aeonen untergehn."

WM. WEBER.

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

¹ Gustav Freytag's motto for the American edition of his *Lost Manuscript*. Chicago, 1890).